Central Government for import of one million tonnes of coal to ensure adequate availability of coal to Raichur Thermal Power Station. In view of the difficult foreign exchange position, the proposal for import of coal was not agreed. However, special efforts have been made to sustain generation in Raichur by stepping up despatches from the linked sources. Coal despatches to this Power Station are being closely monitored with the result that coal stocks with it have improved.

Development of Tirupati Airport

873. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that National Airports Authority has released funds for the development of airport at Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) how far the work has been done?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) The National Airports Authority (NAA) has drawn up plans for the upgradation of the Tirupati airport for Boeing 737 operations. But due to paucity of resources with the National Airports Authority, it has not been found possible to take up the project so far.

Identification of lesser known Tourist Centres

874. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked the tourism authorities to select several lesser known tourist centres in the country which would be taken up for intensive development in the near future; and

(b) if so, what are the details of such centres and whether any of these centres fall in the State of Maharashtra?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Delay in Air India flight for Abu Dhabi

875. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the 13th July an Airbus A-310 bound for Abu Dhabi via Sharjah was delayed by about seven hours when a rat was found on board;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken to avoid such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) A rat was noticed on board the aircraft on the Muscat-Bombay sector and this led to the cancellation of the flight Bombay-Sharjah-Abu Dhabi on 13th July, 1991 due to non availability of aircraft.

In consultation with experts, Air India takes regular rodent control measures like fumigation of the aircraft and use of rodent control devices like rat traps and glue plates inside the aircraft. Rodent control measures are also carried out in the hangars, cabin catering building and canteen hi-lifts.